

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 8, line 18 with the following amended paragraph:

--A second implementation includes the damping material in the retaining ring itself. Referring to Fig. 3, the annular retaining ring 110 includes four portions, which are stacked one on top of another. An upper portion 203 and a middle portion 184 of the retaining ring 110 are rigid rings. For example, the upper portion 203 can be a stainless steel ring with a thickness of about 0.1 inches, and the middle portion 184 can be a stainless steel ring with a thickness of about 0.25 inches. The upper portion 203 is attached to the middle portion 184 through a damping material 200, which is similar in thickness and is made from the same material as the damping material 230 of Fig. 2. The damping material 200 reduces or prevents the transmission of vibration energy from the middle portion 184 to the upper portion 203. Pressure sensitive adhesive 202 adheres the damping material 200 to the upper portion 203, while pressure sensitive adhesive 201 adheres the damping material 200 to the middle portion 184. The lower portion 180 is a relatively softer material that is chemically inert in the polishing process, such as polyphenylene sulfide (PPS), available from DSM Engineering Plastics of Evansville, Indiana. The lower portion 180 can be is durable but gradually ~~wear~~wears away with use. The lower portion 180 has a bottom surface 182, which contacts the polishing pad 32 during polishing. The bottom surface can have substantially radial grooves (not shown) for transporting slurry from the outside of the retaining ring to the surface of the substrate 10. The middle portion 184 can adds rigidity to the lower portion 180, thereby reducing the deformation of the retaining ring during polishing. The middle portion 184 can be secured to the lower portion 180 by a layer of epoxy adhesive 186, such as Magnobond-6375TM, available from Magnolia Plastics of Chamblee, Georgia.--